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MASONIC ADDRESS AT THE DEDICATION
OF BLACKMER LODGE

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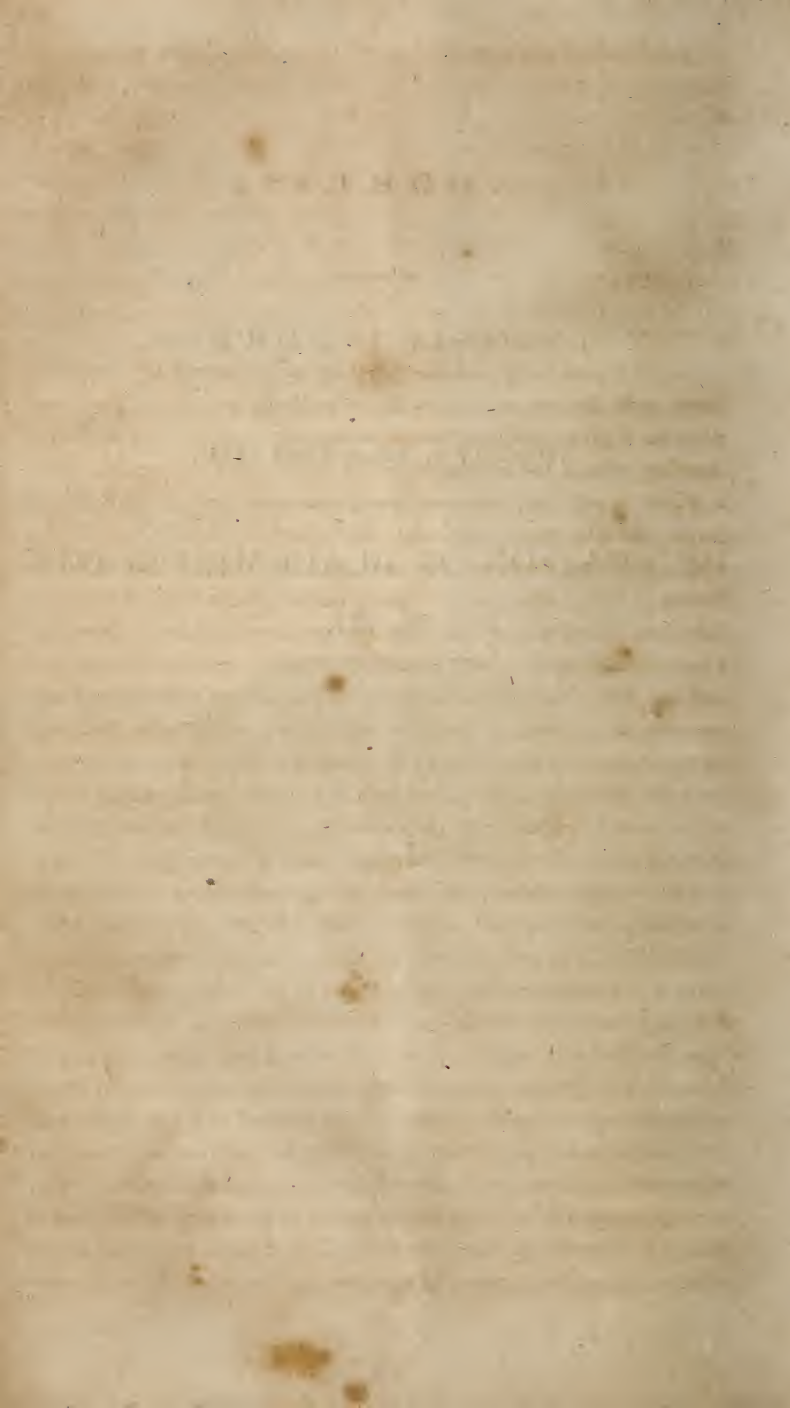
DEDICATION OF BLACKMER LODGE

No. 127.



BY LUKE BLACKMER, G. S. W.

J. J. BRUNER, PRINTER, SALISBURY, N. C.



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A D D R E S S .

BROTHERS :

WE read in Spanish story that on each return of icy winter the Eagle quits his mountain eyry in the rugged sierra of the North and takes his flight to Southern climes, where, on the shores and in the enchanting vales of the Guadalquiver, he may sojourn during the season in which storms and tempests spread desolation around his Northern home ; there he may revel beneath the influence of a mild, tropical sky, where sparkling fountains play mid genial sunshine, where countless flowers of every varied form of beauty bloom ; where birds of thrice ten thousand shades of gorgeous plumage perch or wander on the wing ; where murmuring streamlets wind their serpentine courses through vales carpeted with richest verdure, where bleating flocks and lowing herds are roaming joyously beneath the exhilarating influence of the happy scene, where the glad voice of the vintage peasant rises in sweet songs upon the morning air as he goes forth to his pleasant labors, and where, at the jocund hours of evening, the merry sounds of castanets are heard from the midst of vines that surround many a happy cottage home as young men and maidens, with hearts as light and joyous as the scene is beautiful, join in the rural dance " beneath soft eve's consenting star."

And thus it is with you my Brothers. On each return of a festal morn in Masonry, you leave the rugged sierra of the world, and from long and distant wanderings you come together around the altar of your love, the shrine whereon your holy vows have been laid. Here, apart from all the vexatious cares, the corroding strifes and withering disappointments of the world, you renew your vows of love and devotion to our venerable Order, and grasping firmly by the hand long separated and wandering brothers, you sit down with them around the altar of your vowing to spend a brief but blissful period in the happy interchange of thoughts of purity and high devotion. The scene is well calculated to subdue the feverish impulses of the heart and to banish the wild excite-

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ment of the world. Here, love for each other warms the heart and pity for the wants and miseries of suffering humanity subdues the wilder impulses of your joy, and you look forth upon the wide world, from this happy station, as a field where Charity and Philanthropy may reap a rich reward by wiping away the tears that stream down many a cheek in anguish ; by soothing the sighs that come up from many a lone desponding heart ; by taking the friendless outcast by the hand and speaking words of consolation to ears in which tones of kindness seem like a forgotten dream of early, happy childhood ; by checking the erring wanderer in his career of vice and crime and leading him back to virtue ; by visiting the dreary abodes of poverty, suffering and despair with comfort and consolation, and by pointing your fellow beings from the paths of folly and error to those of truth, virtue and happiness.

The occasion is a propitious one, and never to be forgotten influences should be brought to bear upon you ; influences that may continue to operate upon you while you remain on earth ; influences that may be felt in the happiness you spread around the hearth stone of many a home where suffering, anguish and black despair are now seen ; influences whose purity and morality may be seen and felt in all your future associations and in all your varied walks in life as you travel onward from hence to the grave : influences whose fruit may be seen after this mortal shall have put on immortality, and the fettered spirit shall have burst the bonds of clay asunder that bind it here, and from the topmost round of our Masonic Ladder you may be permitted to enter that celestial Lodge above, whose preparation room is the world, whose Tyler is Death, and whose portal is the Grave, where the supreme Architect of the Universe, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, forever presides, forever reigns. Such are the influences that should be brought to bear upon you my Brothers, on this occasion ; and if your humble speaker were but imbued with all the awful majesty of language as were the inspired prophets of old, he would bring it to bear, in all its wild sublimity, on the present occasion, in pointing out to you your duty while here on earth, and in delineating the matchless glories that shine around the throne of the Great Eternal, the Supreme High Priest of the Universe, into whose presence no one can enter without the *signet* of God, *a pure heart*, by means of which he may pass the last and inner veil to the eternal sanctum sanctorum where those who have been redeemed and regenerated by the atoning blood of the Lamb, may sit down to an eternity of unalloyed happiness, "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

On the present occasion then, it may not be amiss for us to contemplate the purity and excellence of our Patron Saints, JOHN the BAPTIST and JOHN the EVANGELIST, in order that we may be the better prepared to imitate their virtues and practice the sublime principles of their morality. The question is often asked, why are Masonic Lodges dedicated to these eminent Saints in the Christian Calender? The question is easily answered: In the earlier ages of Masonry, Lodges were dedicated to King Solomon; from the Babylonian captivity to the coming of the Messiah, they were dedicated to Zerubbabel. During these two periods, Masonry was regarded as an institution pure in its morality, sublime in its teachings and elevating in its tendencies, many of which pointed unerringly to the coming of the promised Messiah, and inasmuch as Masons were then taught by allegory concerning the coming of the Saviour, it is not strange that when He came they should at once wish to make their principles subservient to the religion which He taught; and they accordingly dedicated their Lodges to St. John the Baptist from the advent of Christ until the final destruction of the temple. Confusion ensued upon this change of the Patron Saint, as many zealous Masons did not believe that Christ was the Messiah, and they were unwilling to recognize The Baptist as their patron. Confusion was succeeded by indifference and inattention, and in a few years, owing to the persecution of the early Christians, Masonry fell into disrepute. In this state of affairs a deputation of brethren waited upon St. John the Evangelist, who was then the venerable Bishop of Ephesus, and solicited him to patronize the Fraternity by becoming its Grand Master. This he consented to do, owing to his attachment to the Order and his faith in the beneficent tendencies of her teachings. Since then, all Christian Masons have dedicated their Lodges to the Baptist and the Evangelist. Our Lodges are dedicated to these personages because they were eminent for the purity of their lives and the rectitude of their conduct as men; because they were eminent as Christians for their devotion to that faith which was sealed by the blood of Christ, and because they were no less eminent as men and Christians than they were as Masons.

Then let us take a hasty review of their characters, for we as Masons would be guilty of the greatest absurdity were we to refuse to imitate, as far as is in our power, the virtues of our Patron Saints.

John the Baptist was designed of God for the discharge of important duties, and the miracles that attended his birth plainly indicate, that he was designed to act an important part in the fearful drama of the world's

redemption. Obedient to his heavenly mandate, he appeared in the wilderness of Judea, preaching *repentance*, and teaching the people to "prepare the way of the Lord." John the Baptist only spake of one who was "to come after him," teaching not his own doctrines and desiring not to aggrandise himself. So Masonry at the present day doth not arrogate to herself supreme excellence, but with meekness and humility points her votaries to a purer shrine and a holier faith, which shrine they must approach and which faith they must possess before they enter the celestial Lodge above; "for there is no other name given under heaven whereby they can be saved." In the humility of the Baptist and his indifference to his own glory and fame, we find a beautiful type of the unpretending excellence of Masonry. He was a man so perfect, possessing a character so entirely without spot or blemish, and "was so lovely in his life and manners" that "all men mused in their hearts concerning him, whether *he* was the Christ." The character of Masonry is such that when the unprejudiced beholder contemplates its beauty, he is led to wonder and adore, but a voice immediately comes up from her altars, and, in tones of heavenly sweetness, says to him, "I am not the Christ, there is a greater coming after me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." As the Baptist prepared the way for the coming of the Son of Man, so Masonry endeavors to prepare the way for his Gospel by softening and subduing the harsh asperities of our nature and by correcting the vices and irregularities of conduct to which we are all exposed.

The Baptist went forth as the fearless champion of virtue, nothing intimidated by the idea that his doctrines might not be acceptable to the multitudes to whom he preached; but being actuated by an exalted sense of duty and a burning desire to fulfil the divine mission on which he was sent, he fearlessly said to all who came unto them, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

His Meekness and Humility are well worthy the imitation of every Mason; that softness of temper which ever preserved him from irritation and anger; that mildness of spirit and gentleness of manner which enabled him to win his way so effectually to the hearts of all who heard his preaching; that forbearance under injury and provocation which preserved him from rash retaliation and enabled him to submit without a murmur or repining word to the decrees of heaven, should be the study and emulation of every good man and true Mason.

He it was who enjoyed the glorious privilege of baptising the Son of

God in Jordan, and heard the voice from heaven declaring, "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

He was seen by Isaiah, as that venerable prophet, imbued with the spirit of inspiration and a prescience of events that were to happen in after ages, lifted the veil which hides the eternity of the future from mortal eye, and standing on the heights of prophecy he saw him advancing from the vales of the future. That ancient prophet not only saw the Baptist advancing, but his own eloquence, the most awful and sublime of all the prophets, was silenced in mute astonishment as he heard the voice of the Baptist coming up from the far distant ages of the future, "crying in the wilderness." Malachi, the last of the prophets, saw him in the visions of the future, and in the midst of those fearful denunciations which he pronounced against the children of Israel, he prophesied the forerunner of Christ. After the Son of God had entered upon that high and holy mission for which He had been sent from the throne of heaven to this fallen world, He exclaimed "verily, I say unto you, that among them that are born of women, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist."

The purity of his life, the rectitude of his conduct, should inspire us all with a love of virtue; and his constant reproofs of vice in all its forms, should be received by us as admonitions given directly to us, to "repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He discharged the duties for which he was sent, with *freedom, fervency* and *zeal*, never faltering in well-doing until at length the proud ruler of Israel became incensed that one so humble should dare reprove him for his immorality, and ordered him to be slain. Thus fell the earlier of our Patron Saints, a noble martyr to his uncompromising hostility to vice; and shall the sad lesson of his death be lost upon the votaries of that Order of which he was proud to be the Patron? Can we indulge in the vices and immoralities of life, forgetful of this solemn lesson, forgetful of our duty to ourselves, to our families, our neighbors, our country and our God? If any inconsiderate, thoughtless brother hath been led astray; if he has never thought of the fearful weight of responsibility resting upon him, I would ask him to contemplate the purity of the Baptist's character, and make it an ensample for his own actions in future.

Saint John the Evangelist was one of the immediate disciples of Christ and received directly from Him the great principles of the Christian religion. The Evangelist was one among the most favored of the Apostles while they remained with their Master; he was one of the most successful

preachers of Christianity after the ascension, and in some respects was the most remarkable man that ever lived ; and it is impossible for the devout Mason to contemplate his character without being made a better man.

Christ chose twelve Apostles whom He might instruct in the sublime principles of the redemption which He was to prepare by offering up His life a ransom on the cross, and which they were to preach to all the world after He was taken from them. Among those twelve there was one whom Jesus loved above all the rest : that one was our noble Patron ; he was *the beloved disciple*. He was by much the youngest of the Apostles, yet he was admitted into a greater share of his Master's confidence than any other. He was one of those to whom he communicated the most private transactions of His life ; one of those whom He took with Him when He raised the daughter of Jairius from the dead ; one of those to whom He displayed a specimen of His divinity when He revealed in Himself the glories of the Father on the mount of transfiguration ; one of those who were present at His conference with Moses and Elias and heard that voice which declared Him " the beloved Son of God." He was the favored one whose seat was beside the Saviour at the last supper, where he enjoyed the blessed privilege of reclining in his Master's bosom ; he was one of the chosen companions of His solitude, in His most retired devotions, and he was with Him during the bitter agonies of Gethsemane. These instances of particular favor, our Patron endeavored, in some measure, to answer by returns of particular kindness and constancy. For though he, with all the other apostles, deserted his Master on His betrayal, yet he was the first to return to his Saviour, and confidently entering the High Priest's hall, he followed his Lord through the severe indignities of His trial, and was the only one of the disciples that followed Him to calvary, owning Him, as well as being owned by Him, in the midst of armed soldiers, and of dense crowds of His most infuriated and inveterate enemies. Here it was that the Redeemer committed to our Patron's care, His sorrowing and disconsolate mother, with His dying breath. And certainly the holy Jesus could not have given a more honorable or conclusive testimony of His particular respect and partiality for St. John than by leaving His own mother to his trust and care, and in substituting him to supply that duty which He, Himself, had paid her, while He resided in this vale of sorrow.

After the Saviour's ascension, the apostles made a division of the provinces among themselves, when that of Asia fell to the share of St. John ; he did not, however, enter immediately upon his charge, but continued

at Jerusalem until the death of the blessed Virgin, which occurred about fifteen years after the ascension. Being released from the trust committed to him by his dying Master, he entered with zeal and efficiency upon his ministry, founding many churches, the most prominent of which were those at Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea, during which time his chief place of residence was at Ephesus. After spending several years at Ephesus, the Roman Emperor, Domitian, began a persecution against the Christians, and the Evangelist was sent bound to Rome, where he met the treatment that might have been expected from so barbarous a prince, being thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil. But the Almighty had further work for him to perform, and restrained the heat as He did in the fiery furnace of old, and delivered His faithful servant from death. It might be supposed that such an interposition of miraculous providence would have caused the savage Emperor's fury to abate ; but on seeing him come forth from the boiling fluid unharmed, he ordered that he should be banished to the mines of Patmos, where he remained until the death of Domitian, during which time he received those thrilling visions from the throne of God and the Lamb, by which he was enabled to gaze far down into futurity and behold the destiny of the church and the world for countless ages to come.

St. John the Evangelist was the only mortal being to whom the glories of heaven were unveiled, so that he might look upon them with mortal eyes ; to him alone was it given to look onward into the dim vistas of futurity, and behold the final consummation of all earthly things. Covered with a mantle of glory, and " being in the spirit on the Lord's day," he had the unspeakable delight of meeting face to face with his risen and ascended Savior who said unto him, " I am he that liveth and was dead ; and, behold, I am alive forevermore ;" he it was to whom the attendant angels presented " the bride, the Lamb's wife." The radiant glories of Paradise were unfolded to him, he there beheld the souls of those who were slain for the cause of Christ, he there beheld " the souls of those who came up through much tribulation ;" he heard the songs of glory and the shouts of rejoicing that arise continually from the redeemed throng who surround the eternal throne.

On the death of Domitian, his successor, Narva, repealed those odious edicts, and the Evangelist was permitted to return to Ephesus, where he immediately entered upon the active duties of his ministry, travelling far and wide to instruct the world in the principles of that holy religion he was sent to propagate : and thus did he continue to labor until death

put an end to all his toils and sufferings ; which happened in the beginning of Trajan's reign, in the ninety-eighth year of his age ; and, according to Eusebius, his remains were buried in Ephesus.

The most prominent trait in the character of the Evangelist was his humility, which ever led him to conceal his own honor. In his gospel and epistles he never styles himself either apostle or evangelist ; and when, in his gospel, he speaks of "the disciple whom Jesus loved," he constantly conceals his own name, leaving the reader to discover whom he meant.

The writings of the Evangelist are among the most beautiful and instructing of all in the Bible. The Apocalypse was the first book he wrote, though placed last in the sacred canon ; next, in point of time, are his three epistles, written in the order in which they are placed, and last in point of time, though first in its position in the Bible, is his gospel.

Before he commenced this last great task of writing the Gospel, he appointed a general fast to be observed by all the churches in Asia, to implore the blessing of heaven on so great and momentous an undertaking. When this was done, he set about the work, and completed it in so excellent and sublime a manner that the ancients generally compared him to an eagle soaring aloft among the clouds, whither the weak eye of man was not able to follow him. St. Basil says that "among all the evangelical writers none are like St. John, the son of thunder, for the sublimity of his speech, and the height of his discourses, which are beyond any man's capacity fully to reach and comprehend." Epiphanius says that, "St. John, as a true son of thunder, by a loftiness of speech peculiar to himself, acquaints us, as it were, out of the clouds and dark recesses of wisdom, with the divine doctrine of the Son of God."

Such were the Patron Saints of Masonry : men so pure in their lives, so upright and consistent in all their actions that even the fiercest enemies of the christian religion have never been able to discover the least blemish or defect in either ; men who acted a conspicuous part in the introduction of the world's redemption, one as the herald of Christ, the other as the disciple whom He loved ; men whose memories have survived the wreck of empires, and whose names must live while time itself endures, treasured in the heart of every believer in the Christian faith, so intimately are they connected with the dearest hope that warms the christian heart. And it is your duty, my brothers ; it is the duty of every Mason, to imitate and emulate the pure lives of our Patron Saints. Every Mason should be a thinking man ; he should think of the fearful respon-

sibility there is resting upon him in life, a responsibility that will survive the grave and be felt throughout the boundless ages of eternity ; he should think of the weight his influence may give to a bad practice, perhaps causing some innocent, unsuspecting youth to run astray from the paths of virtue and enter the great whirlpool of vice ; he should think and reflect upon the beauty and loveliness of virtue, and upon the ugliness and deformity of vice ; he should ever reflect upon the fact that the life of virtue and strict morality, is the life of the greatest pleasure and happiness ; while the life of the evil-doer is beset with sharp thorns of anguish and bitter tears of remorse. || Let me ask of you, my brothers, if any of you ever committed an act, some little folly, for which you condemned yourselves when cooler moments came over you and reason had taken the place of excitement, of thoughtlessness, or of passion ? How bitter in that moment was your self-regret, that you should have been led astray so far as to forget the becoming dignity of a gentleman and say a word or do a deed to wound the kinder feelings of some other fellow-being ! By every such act of yours, you plant a thorn in your own bosoms that will rankle there until the latest hour of your existence ; and, more fearful still the thought, you may have said or done those things which can never be forgotten by others, for they may have sunk deep into sensitive hearts. Let me ask of you again, my brothers, of the silent pleasure, the pure joy, that comes forth, as an overflowing fountain, to pervade your whole being, with the consciousness of duty performed, of purity vindicated, and innocence sustained ; you are then happy, and the chief source of your happiness is the sweet consciousness that you have done something to make others happy ; you may have given a wandering, homeless orphan a piece of bread ; you may have clad the shivering limbs of helpless age ; you may have entered the squalid abode of poverty, and there administered comfort to hearts that were ready to despair ; you may have wiped away the tears of orphanage, and sent joy and sunshine into cheerless homes and benighted hearts ; you may have stood up boldly in defiance of the scoffs and sneers of the vicious, and vindicated the cause of virtue and purity. Would you exchange one such moment of quiet happiness for years of heartless dissipation and folly ? When you have heard the widow's prayer and the orphan's supplication ascending to the throne of heaven, imploring blessings to rest upon the good man's name, have you not thought that such prayers, breaking forth from the lips of innocence, and ascending from hearts of spotless purity, were worth more than all

the idle words of adulation and flattery that a heartless world could bestow? If the cause of virtue has such strong reasons to commend itself to one not a Mason, how doubly strong are the reasons urged by Masonry why all her votaries should be upright and virtuous and kind? All the claims that are binding upon you as men, continue binding upon you as Masons, for it is one of her primary objects to enforce the moral law, the laws of kindness, benevolence and charity, in all their beauty and in all their purity. After indulging such a train of thought as this, you will see the propriety of adopting as Patron Saints, men of such unblemished purity of morals, of such a stern regard to the dictates of truth and who were so fearless in the discharge of every duty as the Baptist and the Evangelist, and I ask of you to contemplate well the excellence of their characters, and at least to make an effort to approximate to them in the fearless discharge of duty in defiance of the sneers of the vicious and unprincipled, and the opposition of those who through ignorance or prejudice may be the enemies of Masonry.

The true Mason must be the friend of virtue and the foe of vice; he must exert himself to lessen the amount of human misery and to increase the sum of human happiness. It is not enough that a Mason be an upright man himself, so long as he sees others going astray in the paths of recklessness, folly and crime; for every Mason is expected to be, and if he does his duty, will be, a fearless and daring soldier in the cause of honor, integrity and uprightness. There is now a warfare going on, one that has been raging for unnumbered ages; it is a warfare between the forces of Truth and Error. Many fierce and deadly conflicts have been fought with varied success. The armies of Truth have generally been successful, but at times, when Error has entered into a league offensive and defensive with Bigotry, Ignorance, Prejudice and Fanaticism, Truth has been driven from the field, but she has never been conquered, for

“ Truth crushed to earth will rise again.”

These conflicts have occurred, they must occur again; combats must occur, the sound of hostile forces must be heard, tournaments must be seen; but let the forces be the invincible sons of Truth, opposed to the hireling, craven minions of Error; and let the pageants be no other than the fierce strife of stalwart mind with mind. You have minds which it is your duty to cultivate; and you should strive, not so much for brilliant and gigantic attainments, as for attainments in moral purity and excellence. If splendor and power of intellect merely be the standard, let men admire the electric fire as it glances along the path of the storm;

true, it may rend the earth and spread terror and death among men ; but what of that ? behold how grand and beautiful it plays and flashes along the sky ! Let them gaze with delight upon the almost angelic glory of the Lucifer of modern poetry, while from the dark portentous shadows of his wings he distills upon the hearth stone of innocence and purity the cold death damps of passion and guilt. Has mind no greater glory than mere display ? Does its chief excellence consist in being wrought into productions of beauty, elegance and power ? to be valued only for its ingenuity and refinement ? If so, let men admire the brilliant productions of heathen philosophers ; true their philosophy is like their own mythological heavens, peopled with bright, but cold and inaccessible deities ; while the philosophy of the modern is like the heaven of the Christian, resplendant with the glory of infinite love. But shall mind be only a field for display ? Shall it be trained only for gladiatorial encounters of skill and strength ? Encounters must and will occur, but let them be only the mighty conflicts of truth and error. Pageants will be seen, but let them be the sheen of the burnished armor and the array of the embattled hosts of invincible Truth.

Truth is one of the tenets of a Masons profession, and when encounters occur you are to be sought for in the ranks of Truth. Nor are you to be trembling, doubting soldiers in this warfare ; you must go forth fearlessly, to meet the champions of Error. Go forth with humility, too, not with vain boasting and arrogant words. Go forth as went the son of Jesse, with a firm reliance upon the God you serve and the correctness of your cause ; go to the great fountain of Truth, which is ever full, an ever welling spring, and there gather a few-smoothe pebbles and place them in your sling ; with these go forth, not in the spirit of vain glory, but with meekness and humility, and the Goliath of your enemies will fall before you.

But before you become veteran warriors in the ranks of Masonry, you should have so studied the principles of our Institution that you can properly appreciate them. The individual who for the first time gazes up into the glorious arch of heaven, and beholds the radiant jewels that pave the paths where angels tread is filled with wonder and delight ;—but how much purer is his delight when he is told that they have shone in heaven since creations natal evening ; that they sang together when the earth sprang forth from the realms of chaos to take a place among the constellated luminaries of the universe as a world of life and light, of joy and love, of innocence and purity. Trace out for him the brilliant

constellations that gem the vault of night, relate to him the thousand legends of the early astronomers, the tales of mortals deified and stationed in the heavens ; lead him forth gradually to behold in each bright star a magnificent sun, the centre of a system as large or larger than our own, with its train of planets, satellites and far sweeping comets ; point him to the grandeur of the milk-yway, lead him onward and still onward in imagination until he is conveyed incalculable millions of miles beyond the most distant point that optic glasses ever reached, and there standing upon some beautiful planet in those distant fields of space, point out to him the countless myriads of new worlds beyond ; point him to the sidereal heavens, where there are myriads of suns bound in one mighty brotherhood ; then prove to him that our sun, with its attendant constellations, is performing a revolution around some common centre of the universe in which its motion is at the rate of *two hundred thousand miles an hour* ; and that moving with this velocity, it requires *eighteen million two hundred thousand years* to perform the revolution, and he will exclaim, " Insufferable is the glory of God,—let me lie down in the grave."

So with the candidate : when his eye for the first time rests upon the lights and jewels of Masonry ; when he listens for the first time to the treasures of her traditionary lore, when he hears for the first time the sublime exposition of her principles, he is filled with wonder and delight ! But 'as yet he knows little or nothing of Masonry. Take him by the hand and lead him onward and upward amid the glories of the Order ; teach him to converse in a language which is universal ; explain to him the sublime allegorical meaning of our lights, and jewels, and emblems ; teach him to converse in that voice of silvery sweetness which hath such magic power as to disarm a human being of the wildest, most fearful and destructive passions that the heart of man is subject to ; lead him to appreciate the seraphic loveliness and heavenly purity of every principle taught, and every emotion created ; teach him that this is the vitality, the very soul of Masonry without which it would be like a blazing arrow shot through the blackest midnight, which in its flight would dazzle every beholder, but striking no shining mark it leaves all in a darkness more profound than before. Then lead him forth to a bolder flight, and show him hundreds and thousands of Masons in his own country, all possessing the elements of this same universal language ; all skilled in the same traditionary learning with himself—they members of Lodges where the same jewelry is seen and the same bright lights burning which he first beheld—those Lodges governed by the same Constitution, and

revolving in peace and harmony around a common centre. Lead him onward and traverse with him the great highways of the world where he will behold different races of men, and where his ear will listen to the accents of strange languages, and show him that he has a language with which he can converse even there, and by means of which he can awake the tenderest chord of their sympathetic hearts ; leave, with him, the abodes of civilization and the lands of universal science, and take him far off among the wild sons of the desert, or among the red men of the forest, and let him behold the same mysterious language used in its perfection among those untutored children of nature ; lift the veil of the past and point him backward in the world's history for thousands of years, and let him behold Masonry flourishing in the full vigor of maturity in those primeval ages of the world ; the same science, inculcating the same pure principles of morality, and the same high and noble aspirations that he now beholds it ; tell him of the millions of wise and good and great men who have taken the same vows with himself, and whose eyes once rested with delight upon the same emblems he now beholds ; tell him they were his brothers, although ages upon ages intervene between him and them, and they, having completed all the designs laid down upon the great *tressle board* of life for them, have been called off from labor in the lodge of earth to refreshment in the celestial lodge above, where they have all received the reward of their labors ; tell him of heart-broken widows, comforted and protected ; of wandering, friendless orphans befriended, educated and prepared for usefulness and honor in the world ; tell him of the tears that have been dried, the sorrows that have been soothed, the sighs that have been hushed, the wants that have been relieved, the wanderers that have been reclaimed, the vice it has subdued, and the immorality it has overcome, and he will exclaim, surely Masonry is the handmaid of our holy religion ; for her foundation stone is truth, her superstructure is virtue, her fruit is charity, her empire is the wide world. Teach him that this universal language is as impressive now as it was when the Chaldean shepherds watched their flocks upon the plains of Asia, although the languages of those nations have sank beneath the wave of oblivion, and that it is through the medium of Masonry, which has survived the wrecks of ages and empires that we breathe, as it were, the air of ages whose memory is now well nigh forgotten ; and that Masonry now constitutes the strongest chain by which we are bound to antiquity, and his soul will be excited with emotions of the purest order, and he will be overwhelmed with the most exalted conceptions of the

majesty and power of an Institution so venerable in years that its origin is hidden by the laps of countless ages.

Here I might pause ; but other topics present themselves with such force that I am constrained to trespass upon your patience yet a little longer.

THE TENETS OF A MASONS PROFESSION ARE BROTHERLY LOVE,
RELIEF AND TRUTH.

By Brotherly Love we are taught to regard the whole human species as one great family of which we are members. We are thereby taught that certain duties devolve upon us as members of this family, which it is our bounden duty to perform. Human happiness is the great end and aim of human existence ; for this purpose governments have been established and society has been founded, with rules and regulations that no one can transgress without detracting from his own happiness, or the happiness of some fellow being. These rules and regulations have been instituted for the happiness of all. It is not for me, for you, or any other individual, or for any class of individuals that these regulations have been made ; but for universal man. Man, placed separate and apart by himself, is more helpless than the beasts that roam the wilderness : it is only as a member of society that he is or can be any thing. It is to society he must look for all the comforts and enjoyments of life : when each member of society does his duty, laboring either mentally or physically, happiness will be promoted ; and we ought to reflect upon the important fact that inasmuch as it is from society that we derive our happiness, we ought to exert ourselves to the best of our ability to promote the happiness of others ; it is our duty not only as men, but as Masons, for *Brotherly Love* is one of the purest emotions of the heart, and teaches us to regard a brother's interest and a brother's happiness as our own.

RELIEF teaches us to go forth as the good Samaritan to bind up the wounds, relieve the distress and provide for the wants of any suffering fellow being whom we may meet. It teaches us not to limit our benevolence and sympathy to our own immediate friends or kindred, but wherever we find a fellow being, bearing the image of our Creator, who is an object of charity, there should we be ready to perform those acts of kindness and labors of love which, we are taught in the Holy Scriptures, are incumbent upon us all. The distribution of alms is not the only field for expansive charity ; but when we do any thing to increase the happiness or lessen the misery of a fellow being we are performing the mission of heavenly charity. A word of kindness, a kind look, a friendly pressure of the hand may be so gratefully received by some unfortunate being as

to be never forgotten. These are things, so small in themselves, that we are very liable to forget them, but

“ A little word in kindness spoken,
A motion or a tear
Hath often healed a heart that's broken,
And made a friend sincere.”

There are those upon whom misfortune will come ; it will come upon us all ; and there are moments when the world, with all of its beautiful scenes, appears a dreary waste, when utter desolation comes over the heart, and nature seems clad in saccloth. In such an hour, when the soul retires within itself to commune with the spirits of loved lost ones, how grateful are those little attentions : the affectionate, silent pressure of the hand tells thrillingly upon the heart, and a gentle, affectionate glance of the eye sinks down into the very depths of the soul, never to be forgotten. They are more powerful by far than the most studied forms of fashionable sympathy and condolence. Then let us, my Brothers, speak tenderly to, and look kindly upon, all. A harsh, reproachful glance of the eye often wounds more deeply than bitter words. “ Not all the pleasure kind looks or kind words give, or have given in life, can balance the pain that reproachful eyes occasion—eyes that have become sealed over with that leaden seal which lifts not ;” how expressive their contempt, how powerful the language they convey ;—“ how they pierce one by day time, and more dreadfully by night,—through and through. Harsh words may slip and be forgotten ; but ungrateful looks, reproachful looks, haunt us continually : we cannot flee from them ; they are ever present with us by day, and when we sleep they haunt us still and make up all that is most terrible in dreams.”

TRUTH is one of the *tenets* of Mason's profession, and it is a principle without which no character can be perfect. It is here used in its most expansive sense in which it signifies not only the absence of falsehood in our statements and declarations, but the conformity of words to thoughts, which has ever been denominated *moral truth*, exact accordance with that which is, or has been, or shall be. Truth when used to signify the absence of falsehood is a virtue so absolutely essential to an individual's well being and respectability in society, that I need not even pause to call your attention to its observance. But *moral truth* is a virtue more frequently neglected, and its neglect is frequently the source of the most serious and lamentable results. In its most expansive sense it means a true man, a good man ; one who can be relied on at any time and under

all emergencies ; one whom the devious winds of fortune or the fickle gales of chance cannot turn astray. One who never makes empty and idle professions of friendship, but who utters only the true sentiments of his heart. There are those people in the world who, like Janus, have two faces : when in your presence they will be most profuse in their professions of friendship and attachment, but who, in your absence, will say all manner of evil things against you to ruin your fair fame. Such persons are the worst enemies we can have, they destroy the peace and happiness of community, and cause much bitterness and many sorrows. I hope for the honor of the Fraternity that no Mason will ever be guilty of such a moral delinquency, for such a person is more pernicious and more to be dreaded than one who is notorious for his falsehoods.

The *cardinal virtues* of Masonry are *Temperance*, *Fortitude*, *Prudence* and *Justice*, and as there are many valuable lessons of instruction contained in them without which no Masonic character can be complete, I will call your attention briefly to them.

TEMPERANCE is used here not merely to denote the absence of intoxication in the use of ardent spirits, but in that more expansive sense in which it is used by the Apostle Paul when he says "every man that striveth for the mastery is *temperate* in all things." In this sense it means temperance in speech, in action, in desire, and in appetite ; moderation in the indulgence of the passions, by which a person will be cool, calm, collected and self-possessed in every emergency. This virtue teaches us that we should keep a restraint upon our speech and never suffer ourselves to say any thing that may injure another person. But the great lesson intended to be conveyed is that of temperance in the use of intoxicating drinks. I do not know as I would make a change in Masonry if I had the power ; it is so nearly perfect, its organization is such as to have enabled it to survive so many fearful revolutions of public opinion that I would hesitate long before I added to, or subtracted from her principles ;—but if I were to make a change it would be in the entire prohibition of all intoxicating drinks among her members. I need not enlarge on this subject, however, for you my Brethren, have heard my views upon it before, and I will only say for the benefit of those who are uninitiated, that no true Mason will permit himself to become intoxicated.

FORTITUDE is that strength and firmness of mind by which a person is enabled to encounter danger with calmness and courage, and to bear adversity without murmuring, depression, or despondency. This virtue

is neither assimilated to rashness, or cowardice, but is equally removed from both ; and it teaches us that we should be as firm and unyielding in our principles of honor, integrity and uprightness as the eternal hills.

PRUDENCE is the application of wisdom to practice, and implies caution in deliberating and consulting on the most suitable means for accomplishing valuable purposes. A man may be wise, but not prudent, for prudence implies more caution, investigation and reserve than wisdom. We should never do, or say any thing to affect another without the greatest prudence in deliberating upon its propriety. Prudence is truthfully represented in the Hyeroglyphical language of Masonry by a beautiful woman viewing herself in a mirror, from which we may draw a valuable lesson ;—it teaches us that we should endeavor to see our own actions in the same light in which they are seen by others ; or as our departed Brother, the unrivalled minstrel of Scotland expresses it,

“ O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursel's as others see us,
It wad frae monie a blunder free us.”

We would all of us conduct ourselves very differently at times if we could behold our actions through the same medium in which they are beheld by others. This representation of *prudence* also teaches us that we should be as careful to remove all defects or blemishes from our hearts and consciences as we would be in removing any defect or blemish from our external appearance ; and that as we bestow much care and attention in attiring our persons in such a manner as to appear comely and respectable among our friends, so should we bestow the strictest attention upon an inward preparation for a presence in which we must all appear, and where we will have to pass a strict examination at the door of the celestial Lodge above, when if purity of heart and rectitude of conduct be found wanting, we will be condemned to eternal banishment from those whose work has been approved and whose wages is the immediate entrance upon the full fruition of unending felicity.

JUSTICE is that virtue which consists in giving to every one what is due ; a strict conformity to the principles of rectitude in our dealings with all men ; a fair judgment and an exact expression of opinion concerning the merit, or demerit of others. In its most expansive sense, that in which we use it as Masons, it means the doing of that which is right, and the abstaining from every thing which is wrong. Justice is represented in Masonic language by a female figure, blindfolded, holding evenly balanced scales in her left hand and the sword of Justice in her

right hand, which teaches us that the evenly balanced scales should be our guide in all our dealings, remembering that the sword of Justice will sooner or later overtake us and mete out to us a merited punishment for all our misdeeds.

When we look abroad into the world and scan the position of different persons and of associations, we find, in some instances, that party lines too strictly drawn, and sectarian impulses too closely adhered to, create divisions and dissensions which ever have and, as long as they continue to exercise their present influence, ever will, mar the fair face of society, destroy its peace and happiness, turning brother against brother, friend against friend, and finally eventuate in the most relentless animosities, which not only rankle during life, but, after having pursued the object of hatred till death, and seen the cold clods of the grave hide him from mortal sight, will persecute his memory with all the unrelenting hatred in which they would pursue a living, breathing enemy. We behold this state of affairs in the political world where neighbor is turned against neighbor and even father against son, simply because the one admires a man whom the other dislikes, because the one believes that certain measures are right and just which the other believes to be wrong; we behold it in church affairs where one withholds all fellowship from his fellow christian because he has been baptized by sprinkling instead of immersion;—because one believes in the final perseverance of the saints and the other believes in the doctrine of falling from grace, and in a thousand other ways this spirit is seen to show itself to the entire discomfiture of all feelings of charity or happiness. This is really a sad state of affairs, and happy would the world be if such a spirit could be forever banished from the abodes and hearts of men.

To banish this spirit Masonry is doing and has done more, so far as its influence is felt, than all other causes that are or ever have been in operation. She banishes far from her retreats all those elements of discord. Articles of faith in worldly matters or christian affairs are not permitted to have any influence within a Lodge of Masons, or in a Mason's heart. When the applicant presents himself for Masonic membership, no questions are asked him concerning his religious or political belief; he is required to come with a good name, being esteemed an honorable, upright man; correct in his dealings, ever doing that which is right and avoiding that which is wrong; in addition to this, he is required to avow an unequivocal belief in God. These are the requisites, and after the candidate has been initiated to the mysteries of Masonry,

he is told that nothing of a partizan or sectarian character will be permitted in the Lodge, for there men of every shade of political and religious belief are equal, and that while each is left to the free indulgence of all his peculiar views concerning matters aside from Masonry, he is not to molest, annoy or interfere with any brother who may differ widely from him. The Sons of Masonry meet in friendship and part in love. Men from all classes here meet on the *level*, act by the *plumb* and part on the *square*. Worldly wealth and honor are no stepping stones for Masonic honor; for the proud nobleman, aye, the King from his throne, sits side by side with the humblest artizan, applying to him the endearing appellation of *brother*, and regards him, while in the Lodge, as a Mason fully equal to himself. All the hot strifes and fierce turmoils of the world are left behind when the brother enters the sacred retreat of Masonry; and he is there assured of a season of unalloyed happiness while mingling in the society of kindred spirits. It matters not how widely brothers may differ respecting political, religious, or sectarian matters, when they meet as Masons those differences are forgotten, their conflicting views are laid aside, they carefully avoid every allusion that may tend in the slightest degree to wound a brother's feelings or to excite his displeasure. Within the sacred precincts of a Lodge of Masons is presented one of the most desirable retreats from the strifes, the contentions, the cares and sorrows of the world that can be found on earth.—The charm that bindeth kindred spirits in an eternal compact is more fully understood among Masons, and is more successfully taught in their Lodges than among any other class of men who are governed by an institution whose principles are of human origin. Its power sways control over all the finer feelings of the heart; it subdues the wayward mind and binds in mild submission the wildest passions; it charms the soul with principles and teachings so pure and beautiful and holy that the rudest mind must listen with delight to their rehearsal. Influences are there brought to bear whose benign influence must be felt throughout the vast empires of eternity; for the intelligent Mason receives instruction that will assist him in bursting asunder the bands of error and enable him to rise superior to the galling fetters with which the organic imbecility of frail mortality is bound by nature. Within the sacred retreat of a Lodge of Masons the purest principles of morality are inculcated. The candidate is told that to be a true Mason he must be a good man; that if he would rear such a superstructure upon his newly laid foundation as will be a shield, a protection and a defence to him in after years,

when the storms of adversity and misfortune blow around him, that he must use a pure and elevated and refining morality for his cement. That if he would wish to have a green island in the dreary desert of life to which he could ever turn aside from the sorrows and turmoils, the frequent strifes and disgusting scenes amid which he is called to act his part in the fearful drama of the world, that he may secure it by cultivating the purer impulses of the heart while in a Lodge and practicing them in the association of the world. When the Mason gives free action to the most generous impulses of his heart, thereby casting many a beam of sunshine athwart the darksome path of earth's unnumbered wretched, sorrowing children, he is himself more highly blest than are the recipients of his kindness. When an hour of quiet thoughtfulness comes over the soul, when the tumult of the world's passions are lulled to rest and the heart retires within itself to hold sweet communion with the gentle spirits of the past, how vividly will every smile of gratitude that has shone upon us from the orphan and the widow rise up from beyond the cold and intervening hills of time brightly illuminating the leaflets of memory, reanimating the heart with the sweet consolation that we have removed some thorns from, and strewed some flowers in, the pathway of suffering, afflicted humanity. Should you, my Brothers, be permitted to continue your pilgrimage on earth till silvered locks and furrowed cheek and tottering step and trembling hand betoken for you the flight of many years, even then, while standing in a musing mood upon the shore of that stream which runs between time and eternity, vainly endeavoring to pierce the mists that ever hang above those waters of oblivion and behold the realities of

“That clime which keeps the disembodied spirits of the dead”

how full of consolation to you will be the thought, while standing upon the confines of time, that many prayers have been breathed to heaven in your behalf ; prayers that have broken in sweet, harmonious accents from the lips of disconsolate widowhood and friendless orphanage ; bearing your names to heaven on the sweet incense that rises from off the spotless altar of woman's heart. Charity is the brightest jewel in the Masonic casket, and it will be the christian's crown of glory when death, hell and the grave shall have been overcome and the joys of paradise shall have been won. Think you not my Brothers, that lives of active charity will enhance the bliss of the better land ; that the soul will pulsate with a purer joy with the thought that many of the sufferings of earth's children were relieved by you ? Under the gospel dispensation we are

taught that faith without good works is dead ; so in Masonry, the spirit and vitality consist in doing good. Do not deceive yourselves, however, with the idea that the bestowal of alms and the administering of consolation comprises the whole of your duty, for "though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, I am nothing." The Order has other claims upon you. It devolves upon you to practice a pure and refined morality ; to endeavor to give tone and character to public sentiment ; to promote peace and harmony in society ; to practice in its purity that charity which "thinketh no ill of its neighbor." In other words, the great mission of Masonry is *the education of the heart*. Man may be learned in all the wisdom of the schools ; he may have drank deeply at the fountains of learning ; he may have soared on the strong pinions of educated intellect far above the region occupied by the great mass of mortality, he may be enabled to reason from cause to effect, and by the gigantic powers of his mind be well nigh able to give a solution of the vast problem of creation ; and yet, if the education of the heart has been neglected he will be a curse, a scourge, rather than a blessing to mankind. The education of the intellect merely, makes a being powerful ; and the chances are too great, that such power will be exerted for evil. The temptations to go astray are many and strong, the allurements of vice are insidious and powerful, and unless the heart be prepared by education to encounter and withstand the inducements of error, the individual will be very likely to go astray. The education of the heart prepares the individual for usefulness and happiness. It matters not so much about the intellect, if the heart be right its possessor will be wise far above all the learning of the schoolmen. He will breathe an atmosphere of purity and his influence for good will be felt on earth and recorded in heaven. The two branches of education should ever be joined, but if either must be neglected, let it be the intellect, for the man with powers of beneficence but lacking the heart culture necessary to their exercise, is of all men, the most to be pitied and the most to be dreaded. We sometimes hear that the conscience, that inward monitor sent by our Maker to supervise our actions, is a safe, a sufficient guide. This is the best argument that can be adduced in support of my position. If the conscience be ever a safe guide, why is it that the poor deluded mother of India casts her darling children into the jaws of the horrid monsters of the Ganges ? Why is it that the Hindoo widow ascends the funeral pile and is consumed in the flames with the body of her dead husband ? Simply be-

cause the conscience, *the heart*, is not educated properly. They believe that such are great religious duties ; and their conduct demonstrates most forcibly the power of the conscience when educated, whether for good or for evil.

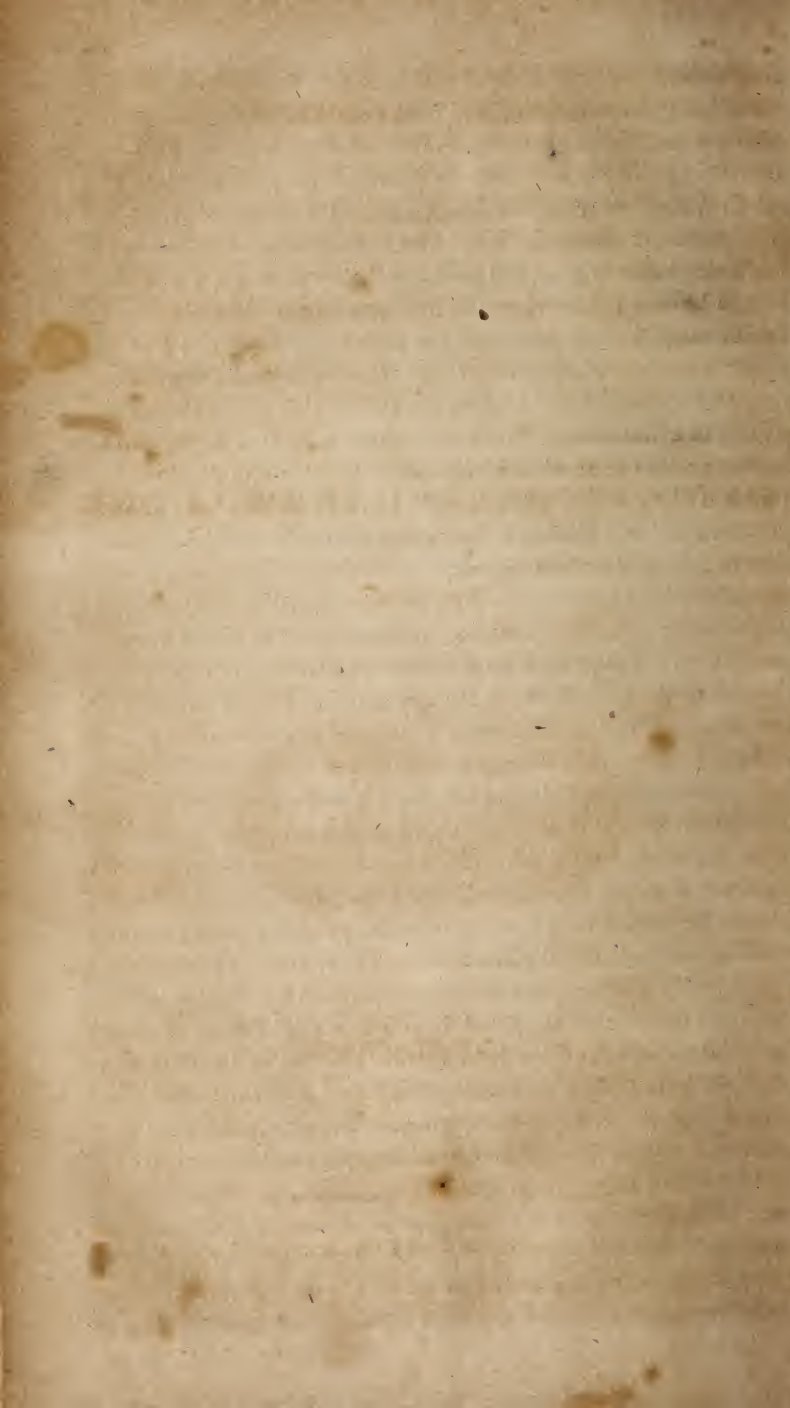
There are numerous objections urged against the institution of Masonry, nearly all of which I have endeavored to answer in previous addresses. As those addresses have been read by many of the Masons before me, I will not attempt to answer them again. There is one objection, however, which I will dwell upon for a moment ; it is that of *holding Lodge meetings at night*.

The busy tumult of day, its press of business, its scenes of restless, never dying excitement, are poorly calculated to prepare the heart for the softening, subduing, purifying influences of Masonry. In the great strife of day-life we have each a part to act, for Masons, above all men, are charged to be industrious. The hundreds of industrial avocations which we behold on every hand, mingle their accents and roll their merry murmur upon the ear. But when the shades of evening cover the world, when the busy scenes of our existence are withdrawn, when the departed sun has left the world to silence and the soothing influence of night, there is a season which has ever been a favorite one with the wise and good of all nations. There is shed over the universal face of nature, at this period, a calmness and tranquility, a peace and sanctity, which almost insensibly steals into the breast of man, and disposes him to solitude and meditation. He naturally compares the decline of light and animation with that which attaches to the lot of humanity ; and the evening of day, and the evening of life, become closely assimilated in his mind. It is an association from which, where vice and guilt have not hardened the heart, the most beneficial results may be experienced. It is one which, while it forcibly suggests to us the transient tenure of our being here, teaches us, at the same time, how we may best prepare for that which awaits us hereafter. The sun has descended, but not till after a course of beneficence and utility, of dignity and glory, while all around him, as he sank, there breathed a diffusive air of blessedness and repose. It is a scene which directs us the way we ought to go ; it tells us, that after having passed the fervor and the vigor of our existence, the morning and noon of our appointed pilgrimage, thus should the evening of our existence set in, mild yet generous, with every earthly ardour softened or subdued, and with the loveliest hues of heaven just mingling in its farewell light. It is a scene, moreover, which

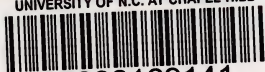
almost instinctively reminds us of another world ; the one we are inhabiting has receded from our view ; the shades of night have gathered round our heads ; we experience a sensation of thoughtful loneliness and our minds naturally travel away from earth to regions of unending happiness and splendor, where, in mental vision, we behold mansions of everlasting peace, homes of ever-during delight. Our thoughts are carried forward to a Being infinitely great and good, the Father of us all, who, distant though he seem to be, and immeasurably beyond the power of our faculties to comprehend, is yet about our path, caring for us all ; who has prepared for those who love him, scenes of unutterable joy ; scenes, when compared with which, the brightness of the sun shall be but as the glimmering of a distant star. How appropriate it is, then, for Masons to meet at such an hour, when worldly scenes together with the ennobling teachings of Masonry, combine to make him a better man. Every hour properly spent in a Masonic Lodge, with such thoughts and contemplations as these will be felt in eternity.

Brothers, the responsibilities of life are great, and they increase in proportion to the opportunities we have presented to us for acting well our parts. You can plead no want of knowledge, of ability, or of opportunity, and as the good deeds of Masonry may now be seen like lines of light from one vast circumference, converging to one common centre, may not the friends of humanity hope to see this circumference enlarged through your efforts ? May we not glance with prophetic eye towards the converging point of these mighty efforts and behold, as their result, universal man disenthralled from the bands of bigotry, superstition and error ? May we not hope to see human nature, through the instrumentality of Masonry, arising from the miserable pools of sophistry and refusing to soil her beautiful garments in the filth of human passion ? May we not hope to see her breathing a spirit so pure and beneficent as to fling back upon their sources the gilded dregs and jeweled chalices of moral death ? May we not see the light of truth beaming so intensely and powerfully as to frighten from their gloomy dens and caverns the miserable screechows of superstition, ignorance and error, and human nature, renovated, exalted and refined, manifesting new and greater developments of mental and moral greatness.

NOTE.—For facts relating to the lives of our Patron Saints and their connection with Masonry, the reader is referred to the writings of St. Basil, Eusebius, and Epiphanius ; also to Ahi Rez, Scrip. Illus. and the Lives of the Apostles.



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